

FRANCE

OFF THE BEATEN PATH

RATED 5 STARS BY HUNDREDS OF HAPPY TOUR GUESTS



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Best Adventures in Loire Valley

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Join us for more than just a tour; our 6-day Loire Valley Castles and Gourmet Tour is a living story you step into, guided by hands that know the region and call it home. Like a favorite book, we have written an ever-evolving story over the past 32 years that features immersive experiences with our local friends combined with storytelling that brings the magic of this historically rich region and its castles to life.

Picture this: a small, intimate group winding along quiet back roads and floating on the Loire River where castles and medieval towns decorate the countryside, their stories waiting to be told. For years, we've walked these paths first, not as tourists, but as friends who were welcomed into the heart of the Loire. Our long-standing presence here has opened doors—doors to Michelin-starred kitchens, to master winemakers, to artisan studios—where our friends become your friends, and greet you like family and invite you to stand beside them in their wine cellars, homes, and kitchens.

You'll travel with guides who treat history not as dates and monuments, but as living drama. They spin tales of obsession and romance, of courtly intrigue and daring deceptions, turning fact into a pageant you can almost taste. You'll walk where kings and queens moved, and you'll hear the gossip, the bravado, and the blunt truths behind the lacquer of royal life. Imagine flipping through the chapters of a storybook—only you're the protagonist.

This is the Loire Valley as you've always imagined: 6 days, a small group, and a pace that invites immersion rather than rushing. You'll rise to the earliest light over chateaux spired with history, linger in the glow of a sunset over vineyards, and spend afternoons in the intimate spaces where magic happens—inside professional kitchens, in the caves of master winemakers, and at the dining tables at their homes; where conversations float like the aroma of sautéed herbs and aged wine.

Our connections—built over years of shared meals, collaborations, and friendship—give you access you won't find in any guidebook. We don't just tell stories; we open doors to the people who author them. You'll meet Michelin-starred chefs who welcome you into their kitchens, winemakers who pour their heart into the very essence of the terroir, and artisans who reveal the craft behind every bite and sip. It's a privileged lens on the Loire, seen through the eyes of locals who love the region as profoundly as you will by the end of the week.

What to expect on this 6-day journey:

- * Behind-the-scenes tastings and workshops in real kitchens and wine cellars,
- * Private moments in the homes of our friends, where history feels personal
- * Rich storytelling: legends, scandals, and the everyday human drama that shaped centuries of French life
- * Immersive visits to castles, with time to wander, reflect, and imagine
- * An active pace that blends leisure walking, exploring, and hands-on experiences, suitable for curious travelers of all ages

By week's end, you won't simply have seen the Loire—you'll have felt it. You'll carry a fresh reverence for the people who tended these lands, a palate refined by intimate tastings, and a sense of having shared confidences with a circle of new friends who feel like old ones.

We invite you to experience the Loire Valley “through our eyes”—a warmly human, utterly memorable blend of culture, cuisine, and storytelling. If you're ready to be welcomed into a story you'll want to tell again and again, join us. The pages await.

Experience: Inspiring Itineraries - Exceptional Quality - Excellent Value!

Off the Beaten Path France Tours are Recommended by Best Selling Author PJ Adams as her Tour of Choice to Discover the Loire Valley Region!! AND Off the Beaten Path Owner, Christy Destremau, is the contributor, content specialist, and photographer to PJ Adams' Intoxicating France travel guide series!



FRANCE OFF THE BEATEN PATH is partnered with TRUSTPILOT, an independent review website to collect “independent” traveler reviews about our tours of Provence, Loire Valley, Bordeaux, Champagne, Specialty, and Limited Edition Tours! Read candid reviews! [TRUSTPILOT TOUR REVIEWS](#)

- Our focus and specialty is and always has been dedicated to small group travel in France – we know FRANCE Best!
- In 2026, we celebrate 32 years experience leading tours exclusively in France.
- Our exclusive relationships with every one of our vendors in France makes these tours truly the trip of a lifetime!
- The most popular small group tours in France, we include “insider” experiences that other tour companies cannot offer.
- Our tours sell out year after year thanks to our exclusive benefits, exceptional quality, and excellent value.
- We are proud to be named travelers #1 choice for group travel for decades!

Book one of our small group tours today to discover for yourself why our exclusive France tours have been named travelers #1 choice for group travel for two decades!

Who is this tour designed for?

No experience necessary... Off the Beaten Path Loire Valley Tours are designed for travelers interested in a small group tour that includes a variety of engaging activities (cooking classes, castle tours, wine and cheese tasting), cultural discovery, leisure time, light walking, professional and knowledgeable tour guides, deluxe castle accommodations and sumptuous gourmet Michelin-star meals. It's vacation and Off the Beaten Path tours are all about having fun, enjoying new experiences and being active!

Guest testimonial:



Mike and Jen Williams, Atlanta, GA (Loire Valley Tour)

"Thank you for a wonderful and memorable first experience in France. We loved the Chefs, especially Christophe and Angelique and Damien's cheese tasting! Next time, we're looking forward to joining you in Provence!"



Bill & Laurie Crimando, Grosse Pointe Woods, MI (Have been on 3 OTBP Tours)

"Just a short note to say thanks for everything you did on the tour, we really enjoyed ourselves again. We feel very fortunate to have "discovered" your tours, they are definitely the best group tours we have ever been on. We had a great time, it was especially neat to spend so much time with Christophe & Angelique."

Loire Valley tour price includes:

- Fully Guided sightseeing, walks, excursions, and cultural visits throughout the tour by professional Off the Beaten Path, LLC (OTBP) Company Tour Guides. OTBP Guides are UNESCO award winners, contributors to Loire Valley Travel Guidebooks, and are accomplished authors. OTBP Tour guides are professional France history and Loire Valley-specific history specialists who make learning the tidbits, gossip, anecdotes and stories of France fun and memorable throughout the tour.
 - 5 nights — NO HOTEL HOPPING! — at 4-Star boutique Hotel Le Pavillon des Lys or Le Clos D'Amboise in historical Amboise, and is owned and operated by our local friends.
 - 10 Meals Included – 5 breakfasts, 1 lunch, 1 foodie aperitif dinatoire, 1 gourmet picnic, 3 dinners.
 - All premium wines and non-alcoholic beverages at group meals!
 - All entry/participation fees for all castle tours, activities, and excursions detailed in the itinerary.
 - Roundtrip transfers on Day 1 and Day 6 of the tour: Day 1 – Transfer provided from St. Pierre des Corps TGV rail station at 3 pm. Day 6 – 9 am Transfer provided to St. Pierre des Corps TGV rail station.
 - Bottled water provided daily.
 - All ground transportation throughout the tour.
- COMFORT ZONE– Designed for the interests of and to appeal to BOTH WALKERS & NON-WALKERS alike — this is a leisure walking tour.

NOT INCLUDED IN THE PRICE – International airfare to/from France, roundtrip train fare to/from the starting/ending point for the tour, 3 lunches, 1 dinner, gratuities to guides, professional driver, hotel staff, personal purchases.

AUTHENTIC LOIRE VALLEY EXPERIENCES! Spend 6 days experiencing the Loire Valley like family friends going beyond tourist hotspots to meet and spend time with some of France's best loved and highly recognized artisans, chefs, and winery owners who are our family friends, and welcome you to their workshops, kitchens, and family homes for authentic and fun French experiences unlike any other!

Loire Valley itinerary: the king's castles, cooking classes & wine

Day 1

GROUP PICK-UP, HOTEL CHECK-IN, LOIRE RIVER FLOAT, COCKTAILS & DINNER ON A PRIVATE ISLAND ON LOIRE RIVER - D

Meet at Saint Pierre des Corps rail station at 2:00 PM. Check-in at our 4-star Hotel in historic Amboise – (NO HOTEL HOPPING – We Stay in 1 Boutique Hotel Owned by Local Friends for the Entire Tour).

LATE AFTERNOON: Winding our way along the Loire River, we arrive at the port of Chaumont-sur-Loire to meet up with local friend Aurelien. He welcomes us aboard his traditional wooden, flat bottom boat, called a “toue” for a float down the Loire River taking in the beautiful landscapes, wildlife and unparalleled views of the castles sprinkled along the river banks. We'll enjoy a welcome “aperitif” and orientation to the week's activities before arriving in Amboise to a magical view from our boat of the Royal Castle of Amboise at sunset.

We'll float peacefully along our route, enjoying a welcome “aperitif” and orientation to the week's activities before arriving at a private island on the river for a magical, privately hosted dinner. Afterward, we'll continue downriver, arriving in Amboise village with a breathtaking sunset view of the Royal Castle of Amboise, a sight that will leave you in awe.

DINNER: Privately hosted dinner together this evening prepared by one of our favorite chefs of the region on a private island on the Loire River.

Day 2

CHENONCEAU CASTLE & GARDENS, COOKING CLASS WITH FRIEND DAMIEN, WINE & CHEESE TASTING, GOURMET DINNER TOGETHER – B, D

MORNING: We depart to the Castle and Gardens of CHENONCEAU. A castle shaped by women, this castle represents the greatest accomplishments of royal women during the French Renaissance. Enjoy untold stories of the most powerful and influential women at the French court, Queens and their love affairs, royal seduction, secret world of favorites and mistresses, the first ever fireworks display in France, extravagant parties and deception, and how royal debt led to the negotiation of a marriage to save the castle from being confiscated by the French state.

LUNCH: Independently in Amboise.

Cooking Class

Hands-on cooking class and demonstration with friend, Michelin-star Chef Damien G. in his professional kitchen. Damien is a Michelin star chef with experience that has taken him on culinary adventures around the world. After having traveled extensively to places such as Cyprus and Moscow, he returned to his native Loire Valley to share his culinary experience and knowledge. Cooking class is both hands-on and a demonstration of recipes. No Experience Necessary!

Wine & Cheese Tasting

CULTURAL EXPERIENCE – A “Tour de France” French wine and cheese tasting wraps up our cooking class experience. Learn very important details about the history and production of cheese in France. We’ll taste a variety of cheeses accompanied by regional wines.

The **FOCUS** is on discovering favorite recipes of this beautiful region and indulging in the French wine and cheese tasting and learning more about French cheeses with our Chef. This activity is designed for all interest levels from the beginner to the more experienced. Following class, we toast the evening with a cocktail followed by a gourmet dinner together of recipes prepared and demonstrated in class.

DINNER: Following class, we toast the evening with a cocktail followed by a gourmet dinner together of recipes prepared in class.

Day 3

MORNING: CHAMBORD CASTLE & GARDENS, AMBOISE VILLAGE, FREE TIME - CLOS LUCE, HOSTED GOURMET PICNIC – B, D
Breakfast.

MORNING - CHAMBORD CASTLE & GARDENS - We depart to Chambord Castle. There will be an introduction to the history of Chambord Castle and the region as it existed during the reign and presence in the Loire of the House of Valois and early Bourbon kings. We share stories about two of France's most influential Kings, Francis I and Louis XIV, their royal lifestyles, and personal guests at the castle, as well as steamy stories of what went on in the personal lives of the kings, queens, and their courts behind closed doors.

LUNCH: Independently at Chambord Castle.

AFTERNOON: FREE TIME on return to Amboise to explore and shop independently at the artisan boutiques and/or visit Le Clos Luce, final home to Leonardo da Vinci.

APERITIF DINATOIRE: Enjoy a hosted "aperitif dinatoire" at our favorite local hang out in Amboise. It's a fabulous social moment "French style" to learn about French traditions.

Day 4

VIP WINERY TOUR, TASTING & DISCOVERY AT FRIENDS FRED & LOUISA'S WINERY, PRIVATELY HOSTED WINE TASTING LUNCH AT HOME, ROYAL CASTLE OF AMBOISE – B, L

Breakfast.

MORNING: VIP WINERY TOUR, TASTING & PRIVATELY HOSTED LUNCH: An exclusive visit of our friends Fred and Louisa's winery where we'll go behind the scenes to learn about Touraine wines and the labor of love this couple has poured into their passion for winemaking. Enjoy tasting their world-renowned wines in addition to some new to market wines they've begun producing.

To top off this exclusive experience, we partake of a traditional French aperitif (cocktail) in the sitting room of their family home, an 18th-century chateau, followed by a privately hosted lunch in the family dining room. Fred's family has been in the wine-making business since the early 16th century. Having spent his childhood learning the wine trade, from growing to vineyard management to production and delivery to market, local wine producer, friend Fred and his wife Louisa welcome us to their family winery and family home as personal friends for this exclusive behind the scenes experience.

AFTERNOON: CASTLES & GARDENS Amboise played a strategic role during the reign of the Valois Kings and their occupation in the Loire Valley during the Medieval and Renaissance periods. Nothing is more spectacular than to both journey through history accompanied by sketchy stories of the private lives of the French Kings, Queens and their courts during our visit, and to discover that there was so much more to royal life than military campaigns and political allegiances.

AMBOISE CASTLE Our day continues at the fairy tale, Royal Castle of Amboise, a spectacular masterpiece where you'll hear tales of love, heartbreak, vengeance, gore, and power struggles. The castle reflects all of the refinements of Gothic and Renaissance architecture and embodies the qualities of a traditional French royal chateau. Following our visit, make the most of your time by taking a short stroll through Amboise to visit the famous Clos Luce, former home of Leonardo da Vinci who lived the last years of his life here as guest of French King Francis I.

DINNER - Independently in Amboise. Guides will offer recommendations. Stroll through the village, enjoy cocktails at sunset overlooking the Loire River and dinner at one of the many favorite places in the village.

Day 5

Villandry Castle & Gardens, Leisure Afternoon or Visit Clos Lucé, Cooking at Home with Family Friends Christophe & Angelique, Farewell Dinner at Our Chefs' Family Home – B, D

- Discover the magic of Villandry castle & gardens
- Tour both the castle and gardens where elegance and nature come together in spectacular harmony
- Afternoon at leisure to shop/explore Amboise or visit Clos Lucé, last residence of Leonardo da Vinci
- Early Evening: Dinner prep: Cooking dinner together with Celebrity Chef Friends, a husband and wife team, Christophe and Angelique, at their Family Home
- Breakfast & Dinner are Included Today

BREAKFAST.

MORNING: Discover the timeless beauty of **Château de Villandry**, one of the Loire Valley's most captivating destinations. While its elegant Renaissance château is a delight to explore, it is the extraordinary gardens that leave a lasting impression. Wander through exquisitely designed ornamental gardens, vibrant kitchen gardens, tranquil water features, and fragrant pathways, where every season unveils a new masterpiece of color and texture. A visit to Villandry is more than a tour of a château—it's an invitation to slow down, savor the beauty of the French countryside, and experience one of France's most breathtaking gardens.

LUNCH: Enjoy an independent lunch at one of the charming local eateries on return to Amboise.

AFTERNOON: At leisure for shopping and option to visit the Clos Lucé, former home of Leonardo da Vinci.

EARLY EVENING & DINNER: Fun, hands-on evening preparing dinner with my lifelong friends, Master Chef Angelique and "Meilleur Ouvrier de France" (MOF) and Master Chef Christophe at their family home.

Tonight, we cook with two of France's highest-rated Chefs. Christophe worked with his friend, celebrity Chef Alain Ducasse, to develop Ducasse's new worldwide culinary project and "Ecole de Cuisine" concept. He is also Vice President of the "Meilleur Ouvrier de France" culinary competition.

Christophe's wife, Angelique, is a Professeur de Cuisine in the Val de Loire region. Both are passionate about the culinary arts and have received top awards from and along with Alain Ducasse, the late Paul Bocuse, and Joel Robuchon. Christophe is currently featured on gourmet television in France as one of the Loire Valley's most highly recognized Chefs.

During our dinner preparation, You will have the unique opportunity to learn and prepare a gourmet aperitif and dinner of local Loire Valley recipes together over a glass of wine and social time sharing what French life is genuinely like at home. Enjoy partaking in an "aperitif dinatoire," as we call it in French, of the gourmet goodies prepared together. You will also learn to prepare the award-winning regional "Tarte Tatin" dessert with Christophe. No Experience Necessary! This evening is designed to appeal to all interest levels, from the beginner to the more experienced, and if cooking isn't your thing, enjoy local wine as we chat the evening away with our French friends.

DINNER: At home, we toast to a wonderful evening with Christophe and Angelique over cocktails on their garden terrace, followed by a gourmet dinner. Evening, drinks, and dinner at Christophe and Angelique's family home is a memorable way to celebrate a fun week in the Loire Valley!



Day 6

Tour Conclusion - B

Breakfast. Trip concludes today. 9:30 am transfer to Saint Pierre des Corps rail station. Earlier and later departures can be arranged. Please contact us for details.

(B) = Breakfast Included, (L) = Lunch Included, (D) = Dinner Included

ACTIVITY RATING: 95% Easy, 5% Moderate.

TOUR BEGINS: Day 1 - Transfer provided from Saint Pierre des Corps rail station to our hotel in Amboise at 2 pm.

TOUR ENDS: Day 6 - Transfer provided from our hotel to Saint Pierre des Corps rail station at 9 am.



Guest testimonial:



Natalie Spiro, San Diego, CA (Loire Valley Tour)

I had a taste of every piece of heaven that I wanted and expected in the Loire Valley! Loved it all! Great variety, great fun!! Can't wait for the next adventure with you!!"



Lisa Jarrold, Brisbane, Australia (Loire Valley Tour)

"I really enjoyed the hot air ballooning, loved the history and all the chateaux were great and interesting. I liked the combination of history, food and wine that this trip offered and the good value of the trip itself."



Odette Pagan, Brisbane, Australia (Loire Valley Tour)

"My favorites were Angelique's cooking class, Damien's wine and extensive cheese tasting and the hot air ballooning. Don't change a thing, it was all wonderful, loved it! I had a memorable week, thanks for everything!"

Oui... what we do – what we guarantee our guests...

we guarantee some very specific services that we believe you, as our guest, deserve.

- WE ENSURE A “SMALL GROUP” REMAINS JUST THAT - A “SMALL GROUP”!

The group size on our tours is a maximum 16 guests per tour date. Many of our trips sell out completely meaning group size is 16 guests (and 10-12 guests for tours limited to 10-12 guests maximum per departure). Our experience has been that limiting our group size to 10-16 guests per tour creates the ideal ambiance for guests to easily mingle and get to know each other, yet still maintain their independence. We also limit our group size in order to preserve each guest's personalized experience, and ensure our famous quality customer service.

- WE INCLUDE ALL BEVERAGES (BOTH ALCOHOLIC & NON-ALCOHOLIC) IN OUR TOUR PRICES!

We always include a welcome cocktail on day 1 of each tour, plus some additional group meals may include a pre-dinner cocktail in addition to the premium, classified and “Grand Cru” wines included at all group meals during each of our tours. Of course, guests are always free to opt out of any included group meal to try a restaurant, cafe or other dining option on their own or simply to enjoy a private dining experience.

- WE ALWAYS PROVIDE GUESTS THE BEST ROOMS AT EVERY HOTEL!

We always reserve the VERY BEST for our guests! Plus there is NEVER any hotel hopping on our tours. We select one exclusive, luxurious, historical establishment for the entire 5 nights of each tour (3 nights on Champagne Tours, 4 nights on Normandy Tours).

- OUR SCHEDULED WALKS ARE ALWAYS GUIDED!

We always guide our walks!! Our guides are experienced, and have walked our trails repeatedly each season - even in the off season. They are knowledgeable about what each trail has to offer. Our guides accompany every walk on every tour where optional and scheduled walks are included. And our guides remain with the group during the entirety of each walk. We believe your walks with us should always be fun, interesting and a time to sit back and enjoy the views along the trail while someone else takes charge and shows you the way! We have specially designed all of our trails exclusively to share with our guests.

- WE PROVIDE VAN SUPPORT FOR OUR WALKS!

In addition to providing guides who accompany each walk on our tours, we always provide a support van whose driver's sole responsibility is to meet the group at designated points throughout each walk to provide more refreshments and provide a ride to any guest who needs a break.

Walking Ratings for Loire Valley Tours...

Always enjoyable walking on Off the Beaten Path Tours - Nomatter which of our active, small group tours you join, you can expect to know, in advance, the type of walking for each tour.

LOIRE VALLEY TOURS ARE RATED AS FOLLOWS:

- ALL TOUR GUESTS – There is extensive leisure walking daily on this tour. Guests need to be able to walk from our drop off points to castles, through castles during visits, as well as manage standing for short periods of time during story telling at the castles. Guests need to also be able to manage steps and uneven sidewalk terrain throughout the tour at castles and in villages. There are no elevators or escalators available to our groups at the chateaux (castles). This tour is not suitable for anyone with mobility issues that would impair his/her enjoyment of this experience.

- TOUR RATING - Tour Rating = EASY. Tour involves only daily leisure walking at castles and in villages.

Additional Loire Valley tour information...

- **UNRIVALED EXPERTISE WITHIN FRANCE AND THE BEST TOUR GUIDES:**

All Off the Beaten Path guides are Americans with dual nationality (American-French citizenship), are multi-lingual and reside in France. They also bring a wealth of local information and history to enrich each guest's experience and have been selected for their comprehensive understanding of French culture. You will find that Off the Beaten Path guides are wonderful traveling companions, whose knowledge and sense of fun and positive attitude make each day a wonderful experience.

- **WHERE DO WE RENDEZVOUS ON DAY 1 OF THE LOIRE VALLEY TOUR?**

Your OTBP Guide(s) will meet you at the St. Pierre des Corps TGV rail station Tours, France at 2 pm. Complete meeting time and location information is detailed in your tour information package that we send you 30 days prior to the start date of your tour.

- **WHERE DOES THE LOIRE VALLEY TOUR FINISH?**

We depart the hotel in the morning in order to arrive at 9 AM at the St. Pierre des Corps TGV rail station in Tours, France. Earlier returns to the station can be arranged.

- **WHAT IS NOT INCLUDED ON MY LOIRE VALLEY TOUR?**

Airfare to and from France, Train fare to and from St. Pierre des Corps TGV rail station Tours, France, 3 lunches, 1 dinner, gratuities to tour guides and professional driver, and any personal purchases.

- **DO I NEED TO BE AN ATHLETE TO PARTICIPATE IN THE LOIRE VALLEY TOUR?**

No. However, France is a country of walkers. Our Loire Valley Tour is designed for active travelers and includes extensive leisure walking daily. Travelers need to be able to walk and stand for extended periods of time while listening to commentary/history about the castles during visits. This tour is not suitable for travelers with serious back or knee problems. It is not possible to drop-off or pick-up guests at the entry of castles before or after visits, and therefore guests must be able to walk short distances from the vans to the sites, as well as be able to also enjoy exploring historical villages, towns and corresponding markets on foot. We enjoy the "slow road" taking in the beautiful scenery of the castles and local villages daily, and our tours are focused on actively discovering this magnificent region.

- HOW SHOULD I GO ABOUT MAKING MY TRAVEL PLANS?

Off the Beaten Path is a full service tour operator and it is our pleasure to assist you with all aspects of upcoming travel plans. Whether you are looking for a suggestion for a hotel in Paris or assistance with your rail tickets, simply contact us at [christy@traveloffthebeatenpath.com] (mailto:christy@traveloffthebeatenpath.com) or call us at 1.717.683.2827 for assistance.

- IS WINE INCLUDED AT MEALS? WHAT KIND OF WINES ARE INCLUDED AT MEALS?

Yes, wine is included at all scheduled meals together. We expertly match premium wines from the region we're visiting with each dish. Meals offer an excellent opportunity to try wines from appellations not available to guests at home, and to introduce guests to some select wines worth a favorable mention or that are exceptionally appreciated by the locals.

- WHAT IS THE WEATHER GOING TO BE LIKE IN THE LOIRE VALLEY?

April through October, day time temperatures in the Loire Valley range from the 70's to mid-80's Fahrenheit with evenings being slightly cooler. Typically it is sunny, but be prepared with the proper rain gear.

- WHAT TRAVEL DOCUMENTS WILL I NEED FOR MY TOUR?

All travelers to France are required to have a valid passport. Please make 2 copies of your passport and personal identification before you depart. Keep one set of copies with you in a separate location from your travel documents, and leave the other set of copies with a contact at home before you depart. If you are not a U.S. citizen, please check with your consulate general for entry requirements.

- WHO ARE THE LOIRE VALLEY TOURS DESIGNED FOR?

OTBP's Loire Valley Tours are designed for discerning travelers of all ages and backgrounds, from the seasoned traveler and independent traveler to the first time traveler to France. Join any one of our tours as a solo traveler, a couple, a small group of friends or family, or bring your entire travel club, affinity group, women's organization or wine society. No culinary, history or other type of experience is necessary. Join us for the vacation of a lifetime to discover the best of the Loire Valley, as an insider, and make new friends along the way.

- ARE ALL OFF THE BEATEN PATH TOURS IN ENGLISH?

Yes. All tours are conducted in English and designed for an English speaking clientele. The majority of OTBP Guests come from the U.S.A., Australia, Canada, New Zealand, and England. Guests have also come from the Caribbean, Singapore, the Philippines, South Africa, and Israel.

- DO I NEED TO BE AN EXPERT TO TAKE YOUR LOIRE VALLEY TOUR?

Not at all. The idea is to learn about French culture, traditions, wine, daily life, artisan lives and culinary practices in a fun and relaxing environment. Our tours offer great learning opportunities for everyone. Off the Beaten Path guides are very skilled at adapting their discussions to the general level of knowledge of the group, providing good introductory information for novices, and more advanced discussions for those who have more experience or a specialty interest.

- HOW ARE THE LOIRE VALLEY TOURS STRUCTURED?

Having 30+ years experience in the tour industry, specifically with small group touring, we have found that our guests are generally more interested in active experiences, culture, people to people experiences and guided tours of museums and sites. Our guests like to visit private homes, and pursue their hobbies when they travel. Our guests enjoy being able to shop locally for items, such as, collectibles, art and local products. Our guests tend to do more homework and want a meatier trip, but also want to enjoy down time or leisure time to explore independently. All of our trips are designed based on these factors. Each trip offers organized activities and excursions daily combined with periods of leisure time each day. Our tours encourage individual approach and pursuit of your interests, as well as introducing you to new experiences and people during each trip.

- HOW SHOULD I PACK? HOW SHOULD I EXPECT TO DRESS DURING THE TOUR?

Please limit your luggage to one medium-sized suitcase and one carry-on. Try not to over pack; you will not wear all your clothing! A suggested packing list will be enclosed in your tour information package. Pack comfortable light weight, casual clothing. It's vacation and we want our guests to feel and be as comfortable as possible during our daily activities and excursions. Our dinners together include a mix of Michelin star and casual bistro style restaurants. For men we suggest a business casual ensemble (no tie or jacket necessary unless it's your personal preference) and for women we recommend a casual dress for dinners.



Guest testimonial:



Ralph and Stephanie Sorley, Boston, MA (Loire Valley Tour)

“The choice of castles was excellent. Cooking classes, dinners and markets were fun and interesting, and we LOVED the hot air ballooning, it was so much fun. Really enjoyed our guide! THANKS FOR A MEMORABLE TIME!”



Amanda Croker, Brisbane, Australia (Loire Valley Tour)

“Loved ALL of it! The pace, variety, quality, sequence of events. Many thanks, YOU RUN A VERY PROFESSIONAL AND HIGH QUALITY TOUR. You have exceeded all of my expectations. It has been a memorable trip!”



Marti Hyland, Arlington, VA (Loire Valley Tour)

“THE TRIP GETS A 5 OUT OF 5! My favorite thing was the extensive cheese and wine tasting with Damien. Thanks to our guide for making this trip so exceptional!”

One of the most flattering questions that we have ever received, as a tour company, came from our guest Dennis Gelner. Dennis and his wife Pat traveled on 2 back to back tours with us.



Dennis' question one afternoon was:

"WHERE DID YOU LEARN TO EXCEED EXPECTATIONS?
IT JUST KEEPS GETTING BETTER AND BETTER EVERY DAY!"

Thanks Dennis for such a flattering question and Pat's and your ever so flattering trip comments! We love receiving feedback and hearing about how guests have enjoyed their tour(s). Whether joining one of our Provence Tours, Loire Valley Tours or Bordeaux Tours, our dedication and focus to providing the best ever authentic France travel experiences during each of our small group tours is paramount!

WE STRIVE TO EXCEED GUEST EXPECTATIONS EVERY TRIP!!



We've recently joined TRUSTPILOT, an independent review website - Check out candid tour reviews from tour guests! TRUSTPILOT NEWEST REVIEWS

Not just a tour: it's an authentic off the beaten path french experience...

Unrivalled expertise within France sets Off the Beaten Path, LLC apart from non-France based and multi-destination tour companies. Off the Beaten Path, LLC (OTBP) is American owned and operated. In 2026, the company celebrates 32 years delivering small, engaging group, walking, gourmet foodie, wine and cultural tours exclusively in France. OTBP active, small group France tours offer travelers the very BEST, and most inspiring and exclusive itineraries filled with cultural “insider” experiences to discover Provence, Loire Valley, Bordeaux, Champagne, Normandy, and Dordogne, France.

Enjoy exceptional quality and excellent value on an OTBP small group tour today! Travelers and publications rate Off the Beaten Path Tours the BEST active, small group tours in France thanks to the unparalleled “insider” experiences featured in each tour itinerary. The company’s renowned “insider” relationships with regional French chefs, artisans, and cultural industry professionals put Off the Beaten Path far ahead of the competition when it comes to creating one-of-a-kind itineraries to experience the very BEST of France! Whether you’re a seasoned small group tour traveler, or new to the small group tour scene, Off the Beaten Path tours offer fun, enriching, interactive, local, and authentic French experiences and activities for everyone.

More than just a tour, Off the Beaten Path transforms the entire guest experience into a personalized and exclusive “unparalleled” active, cultural affair that far exceeds guest expectations! We connect guests with lifelong, French friends who rank among France’s top-rated chefs, specialty artisans, artists, wine producers, hotel & castle owners, and entertainers! Expert professional English speaking guides who live in France, inspiring itineraries, deluxe historical hotel accommodations, sumptuous French meals, classified regional wines, and comfortable transportation in private, spacious, professionally driven vehicles are immutable standards on every Off the Beaten Path Tour. Each tour itinerary is comprised of a variety of engaging activities and enriching experiences for guests to authentically discover the heart and soul of each region. Participate in cooking classes with our friends who are celebrity Master, Meilleur Ouvrier de France, and Michelin-star chefs who look forward to your arrival, and make you feel welcome in their family homes, professional kitchens, and workshops as a group of friends.

Shop at weekly village markets where OTBP tour guides introduce you to our French friends who are olive oil and wine producers, artists, cheese-makers, herb and spice vendors, craftsmen, perfumery and linen artisans, and designers. Walk the same countryside and vineyard trails that regional French residents do with their families.

Enjoy the slow road scenery that comes with walking local country trails through vineyards, flower fields of lavender, poppies, and sunflowers, olive and fruit orchards, and small historic villages. Tour castles, pre-historic caves, and other historical monuments and sites with our knowledgeable, professional UNESCO award-winning guides. Learn the juicy, fun untold stories of French history! Dine in the same gourmet restaurants and bistros as locals do — where the chefs are our personal friends and set aside a table uniquely to welcome you as their exclusive guests. Built-in leisure time provides guests with opportunities to pursue independent interests and activities or to break away from the group for some quiet or personal time.

Every OTBP tour offers daily options with varying levels of activeness. You always have the flexibility of deciding how each day unfolds. OTBP tour guides sit down with the group every day to discuss the activities, excursions, walks, local events, and options of the day. With so many options available during each tour, we ensure you the flexibility to be as active as you choose (more walking, less walking, shopping time, cultural discovery, people watching, photography, etc.), and to also enjoy leisure time to pursue independent interests, all while enjoying the perks of traveling in a small group.

Our tour guides take care and manage the daily logistics and details while you, our guest, spend your time on the critical stuff — having fun, relaxing and enjoying your vacation your way!

The idea behind each OTBP tour is to appeal to the discerning traveler of all ages and backgrounds who seeks something new and different, and who wants to reach out and discover something inspiring.



For additional information, visit our website:

TRAVELOFFTHEBEATENPATH.COM

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

- Off the Beaten Path, LLC is an American owned and operated company licensed and bonded to protect your vacation investment.
- Off the Beaten Path, LLC holds a website identity assurance warranty of \$100,000. Travelers are insured for up to \$100,000 per tour reservation booking when relying on the information provided by GeoTrust IdAuthority (Equifax Secure Certificate Authority) on our website.

Off the Beaten Path, LLC

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Branch Offices in Bordeaux & Saint Remy-de-Provence



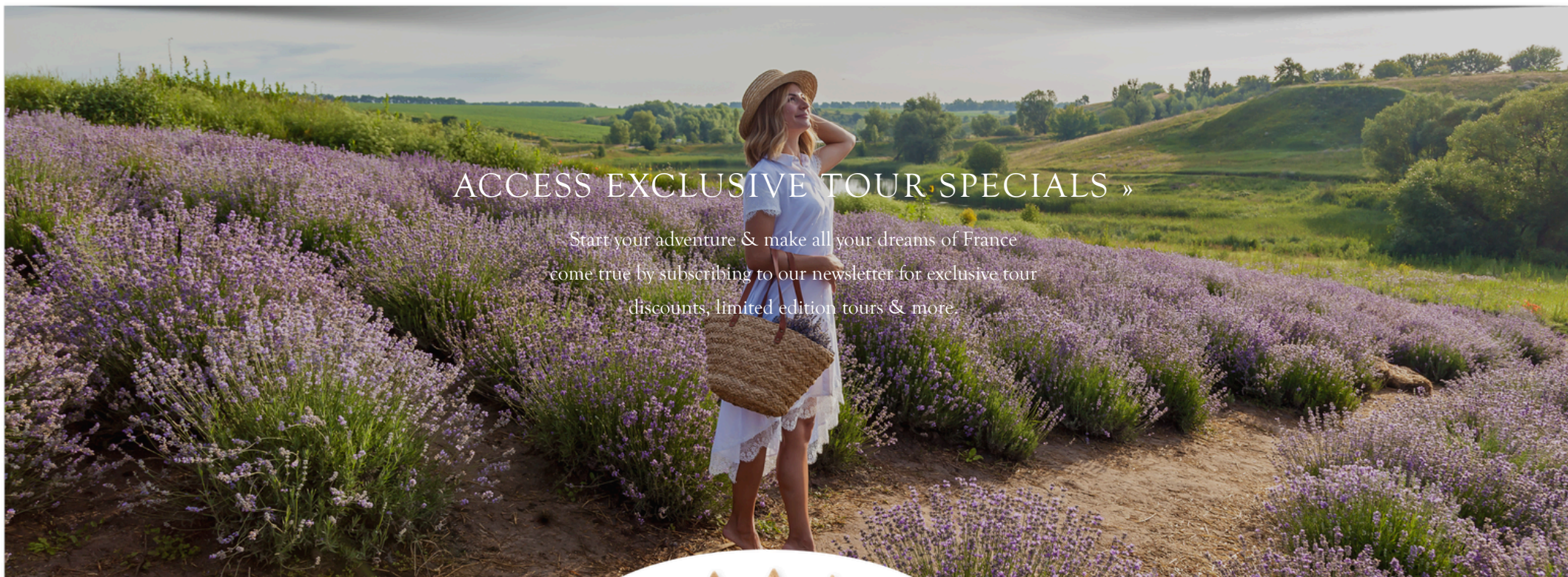
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