



we *travel* FRANCE



DISCOVER THE LOIRE VALLEY

CONTENTS



DISCOVER LOIRE VALLEY

- LOIRE VALLEY CASTLES
- THE GARDEN OF FRANCE.
- THE LOIRE : WORLD HERITAGE SITE
- WINE TOUR IN LOIRE VALLEY

IDEA OF PROGRAM

- MUST SEE OF LOIRE VALLEY
- EXPERIENCE LOIRE VALLEY

NEW EXCLUSIVE EXPERIENCE

- TRUFFLE HUNT
- PERFUM WORKSHOP

LOIRE VALLEY CASTLES

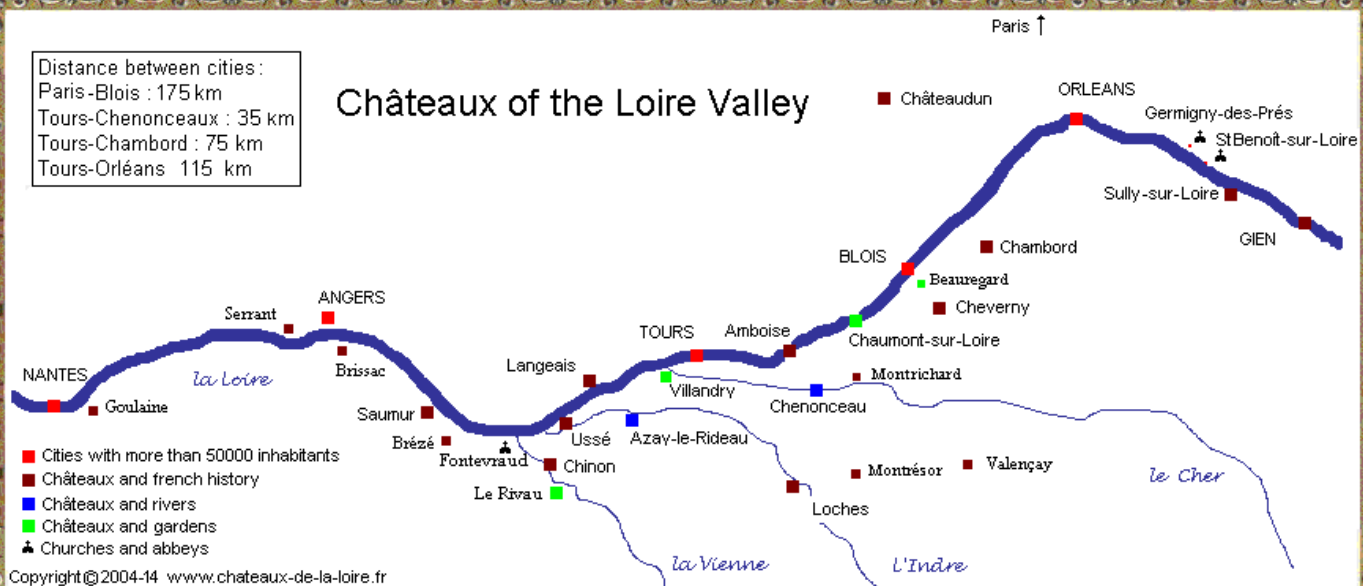


LOIRE VALLEY CASTLES

In a class of its own, Loire Valley is dotted with elegant stone giants: **the Loire châteaux**. The landscape here is dominated by their majestic silhouettes: concentrated over an area of less than 100km.

Amboise , Azay le Rideau, Chenonceau, Chinon, Clos Luce,(last home of Leonardo da Vinci),Langeais, Loches, Villandry(and its famous gardens), Ussé (which inspire Charles Perrault for his fairy tale 'Sleeping beauty')... these castles are inseparable from the history of France and its kings; **these names evoke the stories of Joan of Arc, Leonardo da Vinci**, the troubled Middle Ages and the lavish Renaissance period.

Along with these famous monuments, there are nearly **fifty Loire châteaux that are currently open to the public**. While they all share two common traits, beautiful gardens and the "tuffeau" (tufa stone), a soft limestone from the banks of the Loire, each castle has its own individual character. No two attractions are alike, each castle is a unique experience due to the **variety of architectural styles** and the personality of their former and current owners.



THE 3 CASTLES NOT TO BE MISSED

CHATEAU OF CHENONCEAU

The Château of Chenonceau is located in the Centre Val de Loire region, and was once a royal residence as property of the crown. It is a truly exceptional site, both for its original idea of building it on the Cher River, and for its destiny: to be loved, managed, and protected by women such as Diane de Poitiers and Catherine de' Medici. Today, the Château of Chenonceau is second only to Versailles as the most visited château in France..

CHÂTEAU OF CHAMBORD

Far from the stress of daily life, the Château of Chambord stands completely surrounded by nature. It is located between the untamed royal river and the wild woodlands, which is home to many boar and deer. Just two hours south of Paris, Chambord opens up to the Loire - a river now on the list of UNESCO World Heritage sites for its "living cultural landscape". An essential stage on your journey, Chambord is the largest and most prestigious of the French Renaissance châteaux. Let this majestic stone colossus give you a real feeling for the life style of François I.

CHATEAU AND GARDENS OF VILLANDRY

A unique example of Renaissance architecture and gardens. 6 Gardens: the kitchen garden, the ornamental garden, the water garden, the herb garden, the labyrinth and the sun garden.



Villandry



Chambord



Chenonceau

NOT TO BE MISSED



Royal Chateau of Amboise

The chateau became a royal residence under the reign of Charles VIII and François I. Its renown attracted numerous European artists including Leonardo da Vinci, whose tomb is to be found at the château. Original garden's layout redesigned, with landscape gardens

Château of Clos Lucé- Leonardo da Vinci Park

3 Tour of Leonardo da Vinci's house with its Renaissance rooms, frescoes by his disciples and 40 fabulous machines. A voyage of discovery along a landscaped walk with its 18 giant machines, 8 listening points and 40 translucent canvasses

Chateau of Azay le rideau

The castle of Azay-le-Rideau, listed as a Unesco World Heritage site, offers the scenes of monumental restoration, where stonemasons, carpenters and roofers restore this jewel of Val de Loire to its full glory.

Domaine of Cheverny

The Domain of Cheverny is located in the Centre Val de Loire region, not too far from the Châteaux of Blois and Chambord. Recognized as the most magnificently furnished of the Loire châteaux, the Château of Cheverny's richness of decoration and its numerous pieces of marvellous furniture are relentlessly astonishing.



Cheverny



Azay Le rideau



Amboise

THE GARDEN OF France

The significant tradition of gardens in Loire Valley was established during the Renaissance. With the peace that began when weapons were finally set aside, the fortresses evolved into vast estates where gardens became a new living area, genuine outdoor living rooms.

Villandry, the most famous french garden

With the need for defences gone, the rich and powerful suddenly found themselves vying to create magnificent parks. The most famous among them is the Villandry , globally renowned for its French garden examples, flower gardens, and its cloister kitchen garden.

Gardens in Loire Valley: an amazing selection

An amazing selection of gardens is waiting to be discovered:

- the contemporary creativity at Rivau
- the 600 tomato varieties at la Bourdaisiere
- the poetic roses at the Ronsard Museum
- the rare plant species at the Valmer Kitchen garden conservatory
- the botanic and the Gloriette park of Tours,
- the skill for the " potager au carre a la francaise'
- the elegance of the Park of Richelieu and one of the castles of Amboise , Ussé & Chenonceau o
- and the surprising Pagode of Chanteloup



THE LOIRE , WORLD HERITAGE SITE

In 2000, UNESCO bestowed the cultural landscape World Heritage title on the **Loire Valley**, a prestigious title held by some of the world's most significant sites. The area along the banks of this nearly 155 miles stretch of Europe's last wild river constitutes a unique setting that is the result of a **harmonious blend of natural treasures and the genius of mankind**

An invitation to travel in a world heritage site, in France.

From Amboise to **Candes – Saint Martin** visitors on a Loire Valley tour can admire **unique landscapes comprised of islands and shape-shifting sandbanks** that create an impression of constantly evolving scenes.

With its wide open spaces, preserved landscapes and the very particular lighting that has attracted painters here for generations (including William Turner), the majestic Loire is also **home to a remarkably rich ecosystem**: numerous migratory birds (terns typically nest on the banks), beaver colonies and rare plants (including endemic species of small orchids) have made this haven of peace their home.

How to enjoy Loire Valley and discover this world heritage site in France:

by navigating on a traditional boat
by cycling on the banks of Loire
By enjoying a hot Air Balloon ride





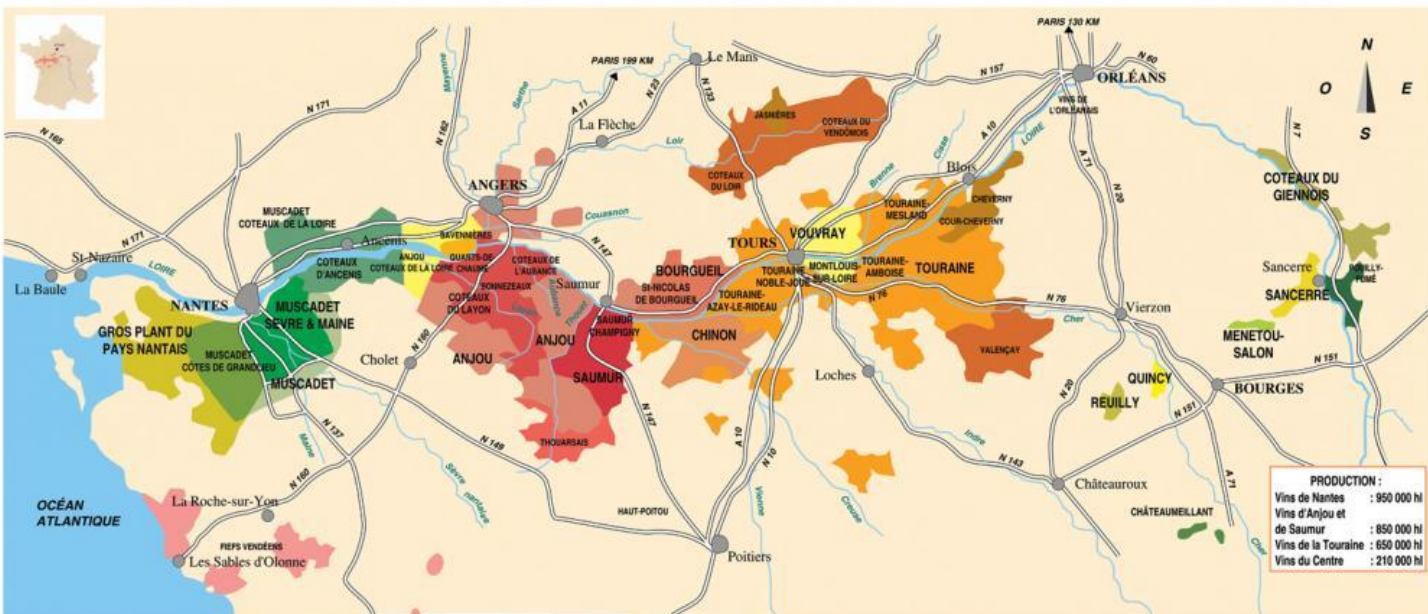
WINE TOUR IN LOIRE VALLEY

The Loire Valley total wine production is the third largest AOC (appellation d'origine contrôlée) area in France.

It is the largest white wine region in France, and the second largest for sparkling wine. The length of the river and the diversity in soils and climates make the Loire Valley the only region in France to produce excellent wines of every variety. Red, white or rosé, still or sparkling, dry or sweet.

The Loire Valley wine region includes the French wine regions located along the Loire River from the Muscadet region near the city of Nantes on the Atlantic coast to the region of Sancerre in north central France. In between are the regions of Anjou, Saumur, Bourgueil, Chinon, and Vouvray.

LOIRE VALLEY WINES

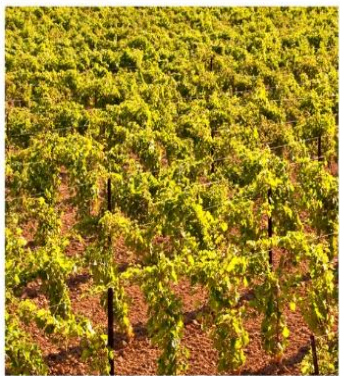


Nantes wines

Anjou and Saumur wines

Touraine wines

Centre wines



WINE TOUR IN LOIRE VALLEY

The area includes 87 appellations. While the majority of production is white wine from the Chenin blanc, Sauvignon blanc and Melon de Bourgogne grapes, there are red wines made (especially around the Chinon and Bourgueil region) from Cabernet franc.

In addition to still wines, rosé, sparkling and dessert wines are also produced. It is as well the second largest sparkling wine producer in France after Champagne.

The white wines of the **Coteaux du Layon**, **Montlouis-sur-Loire**, **Savennières**, and **Vouvray** are based on Chenin blanc and are known for their high acidity when young and ability to develop and age well.

The villages of Sancerre and Pouilly-sur-Loire are known for their crisp and herbaceous Sauvignon blancs. Some producers in the area are experimenting with oak aging their Sauvignon blanc to give them more rounder and softer appeal. However the large majority of the wine makers stick to "non oaky wines" to preserve a maximum for fruitiness.

The villages of Bourgueil, Chinon and Saumur are known for their Cabernet franc based wines that range from light and fruity in Saumur to rich and velvety in Chinon. The Muscadet wines from the Pays de la Loire are made from the Melon de Bourgogne grape and are known for their citrus and mineral notes.





DAY TOUR FROM PARIS



GUIDED TOUR OF TWO HIGHLIGHTS OF THE LOIRE VALLEY :
CHENONCEAU AND CHAMBORD / TOUR, WINE AND
CHEESE TASTING FOLLOWED BY A LUNCH IN A LOCAL CAVE

By private car – our English speaking driver guide will meet you at 7,30am in the lobby of your hotel

09:30AM: Guided tour of the Castle of Chenonceau

The unique architecture of the Château makes it one of the most exquisite Châteaux in the Loire Valley. Nicknamed “the ladies castle », Chenonceau is related to important French women such as Catherine de Medici. The magnificent Renaissance gardens around it make it even more spectacular.



11:30AM: Tour and wine tasting and lunch

You are welcomed in Caves Duhard established in 1874. Its owner and wine maker Daniel Gatay is specialized in mature Vouvray wines. You can discover a large range of vintages, from 1947 to our days. Made of chenin blanc the Vouvray is a mineral wine with a high acidity level which gives to the wine a great aging capacity.



This meal is based on the discovery of Loire Valley wines around a tasting of local products.

- 3 white wines paired with cheeses
- 2 or 3 red wines (Bourgueil, Saint Nicolas de Bourgueil, Chinon) paired with meat
- 1 semi dry o sweet dessert wine.

02:30PM: Guided tour of the Castle of Chambord

In the middle of a forest as large as the city of Paris Chambord was the first Loire Valley chateau listed in the world heritage by UNESCO. Ordered in 1519 by King Francois I, with 426 rooms, 77 staircases and 282 fireplaces, it is the largest castle in the region. Leonardo da Vinci is the creator of its incredible double helix staircase.



7,30pm- End of the tour in Paris

EXPERIENCE LOIRE VALLEY 4 DAYS / 3 NIGHTS



Guided Loire Valley wine tours to the Chateaux and vineyards. 3 days, 2 nights

TOURS / AMBOISE / VILLANDRY / CHINON / BOURGUEIL / CHENONCEAU / CHEVERNY / CHAMBORD

Must see monuments of your tour to France.

2 nights in a 4 *hotel

Day 1 : Amboise and matured Loire Valley wines.

10.06 AM: your chauffeur welcomes you in a luxury Mercedes Van.
Tours Saint Pierre des Corps TGV train station.

Guided tour of the Royal Chateau of Amboise.

You will be delighted by the splendid beauty of the dramatic scenery of Chateau of Amboise, on top of a cliff overlooking the Loire River.

The Chateau of Amboise was built in the 15th and 16th centuries. This authentic royal castle, introduces Italian style to the Loire Valley. Leonardo Da Vinci rests in the Chapel of the Chateau.



Lunch is at your convenience in the medieval town of Amboise.

Guided tour of the Clos Lucé.

In love with the Italian architecture, king Francois decides to build new chateaux in the Loire Valley and invites Leonardo da Vinci to France in 1516. He offers him the Manor of Clos Luce where this great artist and scientist spent the last three years of his life offering to humanity his amazing inventions. Leonardo da Vinci was a great painter, architect, engineer, scientist and philosopher. In the Manor and the gardens, you will discover the models of some Leonardo creations like the helicopter, the parachute, the mobile bridge, the tank... and you will walk through his private bedroom, kitchen, living room, study

Tour and Loire Valley wines tasting.

Your chauffeur takes you in a cave specialized in mature Vouvray wines.

You are welcomed in Caves Duhard established in 1874. Its actual owner and wine maker Daniel Gatay is specialized in mature Vouvray wines.

You can discover a large range of vintages, from 1952 to our days. This winery is facing the Loire River is located between Amboise central town and your hotel.

Check in at your hotel



Day 2 : Fantastic gardens and Loire Valley Grands Crus Wine tour

Guided tour of the Gardens of the Chateau of Villandry.

Villandry was the last Chateau built during the Renaissance period. It is today famous around the world for its unique French terrace gardens.

Lunch is at your convenience in Chinon.

Walk in Chinon historical streets in the steps of Joan of Arc and Richard the Lion Heart.

Your and wine tasting in Chinon, La Noblaie.

14 hectares of organic growing. Located in the typical village of Cravant les Coteaux, the appellation Chinon produces red and rosé wines from the grape variety cabernet franc. According to the age of the vine, the soil (limestone, pebbles, clay, sand), the sun and wind exposition, the different techniques in the wine making itself, the wine maker will elaborate a great variety of wines from the same grape variety, producing thirst quenchers or rich and complex red wines. Chenin blanc is also used to make white wine. To end the day, we go to Bourgueil for a tour and wine tasting at the Domaine de la Chevalerie in Restigné. Established in 1640, this estate is always in the possession of the same family. Mr Caslot is the 14th generation of wine maker. The 90 acres family property elaborates fantastic red wines made from the cabernet franc grape. His best vintage is made of 70 years old vines.

Return to the 4* hotel.



In the evening enjoy Hot air balloon flights

The departure of the balloons is at sunrise or sunset, exceptional moment guaranteed.

In case of pour weather, we organize for you a helicopter flight.

In case of dangerous weather, we refund the total amount.

Day 3: Great Chateaux of the Loire Valley.

Guided tour of the Chateau of Chenonceau.

The unique architecture of the chateau/bridge makes it one of the most original Chateaux of the Loire Valley.

Chenonceau is related to important French Renaissance women and was offered by King Henry 2nd to his mistress Diane de Poitiers.

Lunch is at your convenience in Cheverny.



Guided tour of the Chateau of Cheverny.

In the XVIIth century, Cheverny was the first chateau to represent the classical style in the Loire Valley. This chateau is known by the richness of its interiors, has belonged to the same family for 8 centuries. The owners dedicate themselves to the maintenance of the heritage, tree growing to produce wood for furniture, and horse back hunting (you'll be impressed by the 100 dogs of the pack).

Guided tour of the Chateau of Chambord.

The largest French castle (446 rooms) with an extravagant roof nicknamed "the village". Chambord, built to be a hunting lodge and used exclusively as a hunting lodge, was ordered by the king Francois 1st to Leonard de Vinci and his architects.

17.21: The TVG takes you back to Paris within one hour.

NEW EXPERIENCE – TRUFFLE HUNT



BARON *de la* TRUFFE



Duration: from 9.00am to 12pm

Pick Up: hotels

Highlights: gastronomy, wine tasting

Period: From January to February

Looking for the black diamond, the ultimate luxury food

There are mushrooms and there are truffles. Truffles are indeed mushrooms. But they are the first growths of the mushroom world. Black truffles are one of the best, luxury, food products. Their exotic nature has been enjoyed since ancient Roman times. Today, the famous mushroom (*Tuber Melanosporum*) is still a mystery, but a handful of passionnates, like the Baron de la Truffe are cultivating it.

Because truffle season takes place at the end of the year, they are also the perfect holiday indulgence to the Loire Valley.

Live a unique experience in a private medieval Loire Castle

Go searching for the “Black Diamond” in the company of “Baron de la truffe”. The truffle-harvester is your guide and he reveals all the secrets of truffles: how a truffle field is created, maintained, its size, and the flora during a visit to a truffle field of a private medieval Loire castle. The Baron de la Truffe and his dogs take you around the « truffières » and demonstrate how to look for this incredible mushroom. Become a real truffle expert !

After all these efforts, the Château welcomes you in its incredible cellars for a Chinon wine tasting. This red wine, produced on site, paires beautifully with the haunting, earthy notes of the truffles.

Prolong this unique experience at the château, with a private lunch made with truffles and season vegetables or even stay at the château for a one-night stay in one of the 10 splendid rooms.



NEW EXPERIENCE – PERFUME WORKSHOP



Duration:

1-day workshop: 7 hrs

½ day workshop: 4 hrs

Language: English Periode: all year

Fragrance is the colour of a soul, an impression that becomes one with the individual and an integral part of their being. Everyone dreams of finding “their” perfume. the one that fills them with pure delight and reflects the infinite nuances of a personality. The one that makes them unique and incomparable.

Having studied sociology and political science he began his career in the political field and even received a Historical Award from the prestigious “l’Académie Française,” before beginning his career in perfumery in 1992. From his meetings with the famous perfumers, Edmond Roudnitska, Françoise Marin and Rodrigue Romani arose a vocation: “Perfumery is a craft of art.”

He in his concern to use only the very best raw materials for his perfumes, travels the world in his search for them at the best sources. He has thus developed a line of 100% natural perfumes composed of the rarest and most precious essences such as agarwood, (oud), which he has used for over twenty years in the composition of many of his custom made perfumes.





In 2003, he created a line of perfumes: “Les Parfums Historiques”, recreating faithfully historical perfumes including those worn by: George SAND; Marguerite de Valois (la Reine Margot); Louis XV and that of his mistress La Marquise de Pompadour; Shah Jahan and the Empress Mumtaz Mahal; Casanova and Sissi.

In the Loire Valley, he welcomes you in his personal home and workshop, overlooking the Loire River, near Saumur..

The perfumer introduces you to the art of custom perfume creation at his private workshop. You learn to handle, under the advice of your mentor, the most rare and precious essential oils (Oud , various roses, jasmine , tuberose , sandalwood, civet , amber sperm whale etc.) preserved as a treasure in his coffers .

Earn kitchens and your host table. The experience continues around a fragrant homemade breakfast that combines regional specialties with fragrances like rose , jasmine or sandalwood Unless you prefer a gourmet break around a fragrant tea during which your taste buds will delight in one of the best Chinese teas served with a dessert flavored with Bergamot in reference to the search of lost time of Proust.

This unique moment of sharing to a close , take your perfume or one of autographed books to animate your memories of that day perfumed