

ARTS & CRAFTS TOURS

NORMANDY AND ITS INFLUENCE ON THE BRITISH ARTS AND CRAFTS JUNE 16-24, 2019

It's not often you get to retrace the steps of those you admire. Many of the leading British arts and crafts designers took much of their inspiration from visiting other countries and examining the work of past centuries. Beginning with Pugin and Ruskin in the 1840's and lasting until after the First World War, artists and architects and craftworkers traveled to Normandy and wrote home about their travels and what they had seen. They drew the cathedrals and sketched the buildings and walked the landscape.

This coming June we will follow in their footsteps – though rather than ferry and walking and horse carts, we immerse ourselves in the Normandy and Picardy landscape in our small, luxury coach. We will begin, as did Morris and Burne-Jones, in Chartres with its glorious cathedral on the hill. The statues and stained glass were one of the most important buildings that Morris saw and one which convinced him on their 1855 trip to become an architect. In Chartres, just across from the cathedral square is the International Stained Glass Centre which will be among our visits in the city.



Chartres Cathedral Entrance and Side Street

From there we follow Morris and Burne-Jones and will stop as they did to see the cathedrals in Dreux, Evreux and Louviers. From there we move to Rouen where we spend the next two days and nights. Rouen is a wealth of churches and medieval buildings. The Cathedral is probably best known from the paintings of Claude Monet but the town has always attracted artists and tourists. During our stay we will see two other spectacular churches - Saint Maclou and Saint-Ouen.

And then there are the several museums, all part of the Musee des Beaux Artes but two of them in separate buildings – the Musee des Ceramiques just across the park and then behind the Musee Secq des Tournelles in a deconsecrated Gothic church which displays the world’s best collection of wrought iron works – some of which were shown this summer at the Clark Institute in Williamstown, Massachusetts.

We will have tours of the museums including a behind the scenes look at a major conservation project for a mural by Walter Crane that was painted for a Newport, R.I. mansion. There will be a little time for you to explore the wonders of the city on your own - a city well worth exploring.

Our next stop will be to Dieppe where we settle in at the Auberge du Clos Normand in the quaint little village of Martin-Eglise just outside of the city. While here we will visit the Cathedral at Dieppe and then spend another day visiting two of Edwin Lutyens private commissions.



Clos de Normand, Martin-Eglise

Many of us are familiar with Lutyens work in Surrey and Sussex in England, it is quite remarkable to see how well his work translates for in Normandy, and most particularly in Varengeville sur mer the vernacular buildings are quite similar in materials – knapped flint, brick, and tiled roofs. Les Bois des Moutiers, built for Guillaume Mallet, is still a private home and owned by the original family.

We will be guided by the current owner who is also our host at dinner it is perhaps one of Lutyens’ most striking homes. Set on a hillside overlooking the water and with grounds designed by Gertrude Jekyll, it will be an extraordinary visit. M. Mallet also commissioned Lutyens to design a small home on the property, La Maison de Commune. This home too, is still a private residence and from here we will get a wonderful view of the l’Eglise Saint Valery which itself has a commanding view of the water and a number of graves of artists including that of Georges Braque.



Maison de Commune

Another day we will travel to Amiens and here we visit the Cathedral where we have a tour of the choir which is normally closed to the public. Then we have a reception in a private home which looks out over the town. It will offer us an opportunity to see how people lived and still live in these marvelous villages.

The final visits on this tour will feature visits to several of the Great War. Lutyens was one of the chief architects of these and on the War Graves Commission. Perhaps his most famous is the Memorial to the Missing at Thiepval, where Jekyll again did the plantings. We will be staying just outside of Bethune for these visits and will also see the Canadian cemetery, Vimy Ridge by Walter Seymour Allward and the Australian Memorial at Delville Wood by Lutyens' partner Herbert Baker.



Neuve Chapelle

There will be an opportunity for those who are interested to extend this tour and go to Mont St Michel or to see other memorials from the Great War or even those of the Second World War. We are happy to work with anyone who would like to do that.

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