

Berridge Programs

Find yourself in France.

Culinary Discover Tours

Itineraries and Experiences

PROGRAM OVERVIEW

Blending culinary exploration with hands-on cooking, our **Culinary Discovery Tours** immerse students in the food, history, and traditions of Normandy. Hosted by passionate food lovers and experienced Normandy guides **Andrea Mardon and Chris Gaggia**, the program connects young cooks and food enthusiasts with the people, places, and stories that make France a world leader in gastronomy.

HOW IT WORKS

- The Classic 7-Day Itinerary forms the base program. Prices are based on a group of 10 students.
- Smaller groups are welcome, though the cost per person will increase. We can accommodate between 6 and 12 students total.
- You can customize or extend the experience to suit your educational goals. We have suggested the *Michelin-Star & Mont-Saint-Michel* extension.
- Teachers come free! One teacher per group is fully covered. (Additional teachers may attend at a reduced rate)

A Typical Day

8:30: Breakfast

9:00: Meet up and presentation relating to the day (i.e./ French Market Tradition, Oyster Farming, the AOC System in France, what is a Michelin-starred Restaurant)

10:00: Morning excursion

12:30: Lunch out

2:00: Afternoon excursion or cooking together at the chateau

6:00: Dinner out or three-course meal prepared by the group

8:00: Reflection on the day and free time

CLASSIC 7-DAY CULINARY TOUR

Cost: \$2,400 per person (Based on 10 students)

Day 1 - Arrival & Orientation

You'll be met at Valognes train station and brought to your accommodation at the château. After settling in, enjoy a welcome briefing introducing Normandy's rich food traditions, regional specialties, and what's ahead for the week. In the evening, share your first meal together at a local crêperie or bistro – a perfect introduction to the warmth and flavor of Norman cuisine.

Day 2 - Cherbourg Culinary Exploration

A tour of Cherbourg's specialty shops – fromageries, boulangeries, poissonneries, and épiceries bursting with local character. Meet passionate artisans, sample handmade pastries, cheese and other regional specialties and learn how regional ingredients shape Normandy's identity. Dinner at *Carabot*, a cozy bistro celebrated for its inventive dishes crafted from local produce.

Day 3 - St-Vaast Market, Oysters & Cooking Class

Immerse yourself in the lively coastal market at St-Vaast-la-Hougue, tasting oysters hailed as the "Grand Cru" of Normandy. Learn about their cultivation and sustainability before returning to the château for a hands-on cooking workshop. Together, prepare *Ratatouille* and *Tarte Tatin* using market ingredients, then gather around the long table for a festive dinner celebrating your creations.

Day 4 - Cider Making, Picnic & Coastal Hike

A trip to *Théo Capelle*, a renowned cider and Calvados producer. Tour the orchards,

learn about fermentation and barrel aging, and sample their award-winning ciders and vinegars. Enjoy a rustic picnic among the apple trees before setting out on a breathtaking hike along the cliffs of *Nez du Jobourg*. End the day with dessert crêpes at *Auberge des Grottes* and a sweet stop at *Maison du Biscuit* for tea and handmade cookies. Dinner on your own in town with suggestions.

Day 5 - Breadmaking & Boeuf Bourguignon

Step back in time at a restored 16th-century windmill in Fierville-les-Mines, where you'll learn to grind flour, knead dough, and bake bread in a centuries-old wood-fired oven. After a hearty crêpe lunch overlooking the valley, visit a local butcher to select ingredients for *Boeuf Bourguignon*. Return to the château for an evening of cooking, conversation, and indulgence – ending with rich homemade chocolate mousse.

Day 6 - Cheese, Seafood & Lighthouse Views

Begin your day with a tasting at *La Crèmerie St-Pierre-Église*, where you'll discover the secrets of Normandy's renowned cheeses. Continue to *Barfleur*, a postcard-perfect harbor village, for a fresh seafood lunch overlooking the water. In the afternoon, climb the towering *Gatteville Lighthouse* for panoramic views of the coast, then return to the château to prepare and enjoy a *Fruits de Mer* feast together.

Day 7 - Isigny, Omaha Beach & Sainte-Mère-Église

Visit *Isigny-sur-Mer*, home of the world-famous Isigny A.O.P. butter and traditional caramels, with tastings and a behind-the-scenes look at local production. Enjoy lunch at *Écuries* in Sainte-Mère-Église before an afternoon of reflection at *Omaha Beach* and the American Cemetery, honoring Normandy's powerful history and enduring spirit. Dinner on your own, with local recommendations provided.

EXTENSION SUGGESTION - Michelin-Star & Mont-Saint-Michel

Cost: \$700/per person (Based on 10 students)

Day 8 - Michelin-Starred Farewell Lunch

Enjoy a leisurely morning, then celebrate with a Michelin-starred lunch at *Le Pily*, where Chef Pierre Marion reimagines Normandy's finest ingredients.

Day 9 - Mont-Saint-Michel

Visit the legendary tidal island and medieval abbey of Mont-Saint-Michel. Explore its winding streets and take in panoramic views before an overnight stay in nearby Avranches.

Day 10 - Copper Craftsmanship & Departure

Tour *L'Atelier du Cuivre* and *Mauviel* in Villedieu-les-Poêles to learn about traditional copper cookware. Depart in the afternoon for Paris with onward travel suggestions.

What's Included

- All accommodations at our château
- Round-trip transportation from Valognes train station
- All group transportation during the program
- Daily breakfast at the residence
- Three lunches and three dinners at local restaurants
- Three communal dinners prepared together in the château kitchen (equipment provided)
- Guidance for "own choice" meals to fit every budget

Not Included

- Airfare to Paris and train travel to Normandy
- "Own choice" meals as outlined above

FIELD TRIP LIST

Read more in-depth about our experiences or talk with us about customizing your trip.

Nez du Jobourg Coastal Hike

Embark on a breathtaking hike along the dramatic cliffs of Nez du Jobourg, one of France's most stunning coastal landscapes. Marvel at sweeping views of the English Channel, hidden coves, and windswept heathlands teeming with wildlife. Perfect for nature enthusiasts, this walk combines invigorating hiking with awe-inspiring scenery.

Château Ravalet Gardens

Wander through the enchanting gardens of Château Ravalet, a 16th-century masterpiece surrounded by lush greenery, ornamental ponds, and vibrant flower beds. The peaceful atmosphere invites you to relax and take in the harmonious blend of architecture and nature.

Saint-Vaast-la-Hougue and Tatihou Island

Discover the quaint charm of Saint-Vaast-la-Hougue, a picturesque fishing village, and explore Tatihou Island, a UNESCO World Heritage site. The area offers tranquil seaside views, historic fortifications, and unique maritime traditions.

16th-Century Windmill and Breadmaking in Fierville-les-Mines

Step back in time at a beautifully restored 16th-century windmill, where you'll learn the traditional art of breadmaking. Experience the satisfaction of crafting your own loaf and savor the aroma of fresh, oven-baked bread.

Bricquebec Market

Experience the lively charm of the Bricquebec market, where locals gather to sell fresh produce, artisanal goods, and regional specialties. Immerse yourself in the authentic flavors and vibrant culture of Normandy.

Saint-Vaast Market

Explore the bustling Saint-Vaast market, filled with stalls offering fresh seafood, cheeses, and other local delicacies. Engage with friendly vendors and soak in the coastal village atmosphere.

Barfleur

Visit the postcard-perfect village of Barfleur, known for its cobblestone streets, granite houses, and scenic harbor. This tranquil gem holds the distinction of being one of "Les Plus Beaux Villages de France" (The Most Beautiful Villages of France).

Gatteville Lighthouse

Scale the iconic Gatteville Lighthouse, one of the tallest in Europe, for breathtaking views of the rugged coastline and the sparkling sea. A must-see for lighthouse enthusiasts and adventure seekers alike.

Local Bakery Tour

Indulge your senses on a tour of a traditional Norman bakery, where the aroma of fresh baguettes and pastries fills the air. Watch artisans at work and enjoy tasting classic French breads and treats.

Cider Making Tour

Discover the craftsmanship behind Normandy's famous ciders with a visit to a local cider house. Learn about the production process, stroll through picturesque orchards, and savor tastings of this beloved regional beverage.

Butcher Tour

Dive into Normandy's culinary traditions with a tour of a local butcher, showcasing techniques honed over generations. Learn about regional cuts, sample cured meats, and gain a deeper appreciation for this artisan trade.

Isigny-sur-Mer - Butter & Caramels

Visit the famed Isigny cooperative, where rich pastures yield the golden, silky **Isigny A.O.P. Butter**, prized by chefs worldwide. Then sample **Caramels d'Isigny**, handmade in copper kettles with the same butter and cream.

Sainte-Mère-Église - Ferme-Musée du Cotentin

Step into Normandy's rural past at this working farm museum. Explore historic dairies, cider presses, and gardens to see how traditional techniques still shape the region's signature foods.

Villedieu-les-Poêles - Copper Craftsmanship

Visit the Mauviel workshop, renowned for its handcrafted copper cookware, a tradition that has been passed down through generations in this "City of Copper." Watch the stamping, hammering, and polishing that turn raw copper into tools cherished by chefs worldwide and explore the boutique showcasing their stunning, handcrafted pieces found in Michelin starred kitchens everywhere.

Cherbourg - Specialty Shop Experience

Explore Cherbourg's **fromageries, boulangeries, poissonneries, and épiceries** – meeting artisans who bring Normandy's terroir to life through cheese, seafood, pastries, and preserves.

HISTORICAL SITES

Omaha Beach

Stand on the sands of **Omaha Beach**, where Allied forces landed on June 6, 1944. Visit the American Cemetery and Memorial, and reflect on the courage, sacrifice, and enduring legacy of this pivotal moment in world history.

Mont-Saint-Michel

Explore Mont-Saint-Michel, France's most visited UNESCO World Heritage Site and home to a 1,000-year-old abbey perched atop a tidal island. Wander its winding streets, climb to the ramparts for spectacular views, and experience one of the most breathtaking landmarks in all of France.

Bayeux (Omaha

Step into the medieval charm of **Bayeux**, home to the famed 11th-century tapestry that chronicles the Norman conquest of England. Stroll its cobbled streets, Gothic cathedral, and vibrant town center rich with history and character.

DINING EXPERIENCES - INCLUDED RESTAURANTS

Carabot

Listed in the revered Gault and Millau guide, young chef Brice Moncuit offers A cozy bistro celebrated for its market-driven cuisine featuring fresh, local seafood. A buzzy atmosphere and open kitchen make for an energetic culinary experience from one of Cherbourg's hottest young chefs.

Bistro Bouche

Listed in Michelin's Bib Gourmand, Bistro offers a modern take on the hamburger using some of the best grass-fed beef found in France. This casual eatery draws in the crowds and offers affordable, high-quality eats in a buzzy atmosphere.

La Musette

A hidden gem in the heart of Cherbourg, La Musette offers authentic French cuisine made with seasonal and biodynamic products. Its chic yet cozy setting complements the thoughtfully prepared dishes, making every meal a memorable experience.

Café de France - Barfleur

Nestled on the picturesque Quai Henri Chardon, Café de France offers a quintessential French dining experience with breathtaking harbor views. Renowned for its exceptional seafood, the menu features classics like moules frites, oysters, steak frites, and crème brûlée, all prepared with fresh, local ingredients.

Le Comptoir Libanais

This vibrant eatery brings the flavors of Lebanon to Cherbourg, serving a variety of mezze, grilled meats, and other specialties. The colorful, flavorful dishes and warm atmosphere make it a lively choice for a casual but satisfying meal.

Pain Paulette

A beloved bakery and pâtisserie run by Jen Francois Foucher, one of France's top 10 pastry chefs, Pain Paulette specializes in artisanal breads and pastries, including sourdough, rye breads, and seasonal treats. Perfect for breakfast or a light snack, it highlights high-quality ingredients and careful craftsmanship.

Auberge des Grottes - Nez du Jobourg

Perched above the dramatic cliffs of Nez du Jobourg, this charming inn offers panoramic views of the Channel Islands. The menu celebrates Normandy's coastal bounty, featuring inventive seafood dishes crafted with local ingredients.

SPECIALTY DINING EXPERIENCES

Le Cap - Barneville-Carteret (Add-on of \$40/person)

Just steps from the beach, Le Cap is a seafood lover's paradise. Indulge in their legendary *plateau de fruits de mer*, overflowing with fresh oysters, shrimp, whelks, and shellfish, all sourced from local fishermen. Enjoy it indoors or on the terrace with stunning port and sea views.

Le Panoramique - La Pernelle (add on of \$50 per person)

Located 30 minutes from Cherbourg, this restaurant offers a breathtaking setting with sweeping views of the sea. The menu focuses on refined local cuisine, prepared with seasonal ingredients. Recognized with "Normandie Qualité Tourisme" and "Maison de Qualité Restaurateurs de France" labels, it provides a memorable dining experience in a welcoming atmosphere.

Chez Roger - Sainte-Marie-du-Mont (Add on of \$80 per person)

Nestled in the heart of the Beauguillot Nature Reserve, Chez Roger offers an intimate, reservation-only dining experience. Guests are treated to a seasonal, multi-course menu crafted from fresh, local ingredients. Signature dishes include flambéed blue lobster with Calvados and tender lamb from the salt meadows.

Le Pily (Add on of \$100/person)

Michelin-starred restaurant Le Pily, led by Chef Pierre Marion, offers imaginative seafood creations in an intimate and elegant setting. Where art meets food, every detail is perfect in this elevated, special dining experience. Meet the chef and ask him what inspires his creations!