

RIVIERA SEINE CRUISE ITINERARY

Cruising the Seine is a special treat. We're truly in the heart of one of France's historic and stunningly attractive dukedoms – Normandy. Villages slip by, birds glide on thermals rising from the surrounding cliffs and, as this ever-changing kaleidoscope slips by, it's an ideal opportunity to join new friends for a chat. Squeeze in a spot of reading on the Sun Deck or simply recline, letting the gentle breezes lull you into a relaxing doze. You'll be totally unwound and modern life will seem very distant. Ashore, visit remarkable cities and towns that have stood the test of time, rich in history, and be moved at the Normandy Beaches.

June 24, 2025: PARIS

On arrival, our cruise ship, the Jane Austen, will be moored on the River Seine in the heart of the city. The friendly crew will welcome you on board, helping you settle into your spacious and exquisitely furnished accommodation – you'll immediately feel at home. This evening you enjoy your first sumptuous dinner, served in the ship's restaurant. We will sail this evening down the Seine for Les Andelys

June 25, 2025: LES ANDELYS

As you enjoy breakfast, the landscape passes by serenely and you quickly get used to this luxurious sightseeing experience. Rounding a sweeping bend so typical of the Seine, we reach the town of Mantes-la-Jolie with its imposing church. Straight ahead is a medieval stone bridge. The central section of the bridge was destroyed during the Second World War and never repaired – it's the first of many poignant reminders that this region of France has been a battleground for centuries.

Beyond Mantes we encounter another typical feature of the Seine as it flows seaward – picturesque chalk cliffs, almost resembling a giant's teeth. Beautiful villages like La Roche Guyon slide by, surrounded by bocage countryside of lush pastures and high hedgerows, countless cider orchards, half-timbered barns, and ancient wooden farmhouses..

While you're enjoying your first delicious lunch, the captain will skillfully berth at Les Andelys, a small town dominated by one of the most spectacular sights along the entire valley – Château Gaillard. This afternoon we discover the story behind this remarkable castle, with entrance fee included. The remarkable Château Gaillard guards the apex of the river bend and was built by Richard the Lionheart in the 12th-century to defend Rouen from the French. Besieged many times during the turbulent history of northern France, Château Gaillard is now one of the most dramatic ruins in the region. Should you wish, visit the wheelhouse, the Captain is always delighted to explain to those interested how the highly sophisticated navigation and safety systems operate.

JUNE 26, 2025: ROUEN & CAUDEBEC-EN-CAUX

We awake in Rouen, Normandy's capital, one of Europe's finest medieval cities and the scene of many momentous events over the centuries. Pride of place on our guided tour of the city belongs to its stunning Gothic cathedral, which was immortalized by the great Impressionist Claude Monet in a series of 28 paintings showing the facade at varying times of the day and in different weather conditions.

Briefly becoming the world's tallest building when the soaring spire was added in the 19th century, the cathedral is also notable for the recumbent statue reputedly containing the heart of Richard the Lionheart.

Rouen's beautifully tangled alleyways are a revelation, lined with antique shops, tasteful boutiques and, of course, countless restaurants serving exceptional local cuisine emphasizing the country's outstanding gastronomic heritage. The Place du Vieux-Marché is one of the city's most poignant spots; a large cross marks the point where the 'Maid of Orléans' Joan of Arc was burned at the stake for her beliefs

During another superb lunch, we cast off to navigate through yet more twists and turns, chalk cliffs and a landscape of forest-covered hills that are designated as areas of outstanding natural beauty and sanctuaries for diverse wildlife, including deer and wild boar. Another highlight of the valley soon greets us – the ethereal ruins of Jumièges Abbey. Founded in the 7th century, it was consecrated in the presence of William the Conqueror and was an important political and religious center until it was sacked in the 16th century. In the late afternoon we moor in the pretty town of Caudebec-en-Caux, so after dinner why not take a stroll to explore this lovely spot, with its typical market square, richly decorated church and the Maison des Templiers, one of the oldest houses in Normandy.

JUNE 27, 2025: BAYEUX AND THE NORMANDY BEACHES

After breakfast you'll be ready for a full-day tour exploring two of the most important aspects of European history – the Bayeux Tapestry and the D-Day landings. (Please note lunch is not provided today.) Bayeux itself is a delightful town with a historic core that escaped the ravages of war, But, of course, Bayeux is most famous as the home of the tapestry telling the story of the Norman invasion of Britain in 1066 in glorious detail. Among its 75 scenes are the coronation of Harold following the death of Edward the Confessor and his subsequent demise at the Battle of Hastings, which led to William of Normandy invading England and becoming king. The 230-foot-long tapestry is made up of nine panels of extremely delicate embroidery – gazing at its wonderful depictions of the battle and the period's architecture, weapons and everyday life, you'll appreciate why the Bayeux Tapestry is arguably the finest relic of the Middle Ages.

This afternoon we drive to nearby Pointe du Hoc, the highest point between the American sector landings on D-Day, dominating the sea from its vertical cliff with Utah Beach to the west and Omaha Beach to the east. We continue to Omaha beach, the most intensely fought after beach on June 6th, 1944. At six miles wide, the whole of the beach at Omaha was overlooked by cliffs which made attacking the area very difficult. The American troops were given the task of doing just this, and by the end of the day they had landed 34,000 troops, suffering 2,400 casualties. At the eastern end of the shoreline is the Normandy American Cemetery, established by the U.S. First Army on June 8, 1944 as the first American cemetery on European soil. We take the short drive to visit this memorial honoring the American troops who died in Europe during World War II, located on the site of the former temporary battlefield cemetery of Saint Laurent.

After a day recalling such momentous events and the stories surrounding them, thoughts turn again to the culinary delights awaiting you in the refined comfort of the ship's restaurant.

JUNE 28, 2025: HONFLEUR

Honfleur is often regarded as the most picturesque spot on the northern French coast, and after breakfast, we make the short journey to this delightful town and enjoy a guided tour. Its old harbor is beautifully preserved and surrounded by a perfect waterfront of pastel-colored 16th- to 18th-century houses, many converted to seafood restaurants. Watch the talented artists capturing the captivating views along the waterfront, while the intricate maze of streets behind is also well worth discovering. The eaves of the tall half-timbered buildings almost touch, and on the streets below is an abundance of traditional shops selling antiques, books and fine foods. Honfleur's most famous son is Eugene Boudin, one of the forerunners of Impressionism and a friend of Claude Monet, who also painted the harbor many times.

After returning to the ship for lunch, we slip our mooring and begin our passage back upstream, retracing the river's winding course, its huge variety of wildlife, enchanting scenery and forests, all reflected in differing colors in the sparkling waters.

JUNE 29, 2025: GIVERNY & VERNON

One of the great delights of river cruising is the magical sensation of waking up in a different place from where you were the night before. This morning the ship has moored in delightful Vernon, and we take the short drive to Giverny to visit Monet's garden and house. The artist himself called his garden his 'most beautiful masterpiece', and it's certainly one of the world's most photographed and painted, ideally viewed in the delicate morning light. In the Japanese-inspired water garden, shaded by great weeping willows and surrounded by bamboo, rhododendrons, and azaleas, is the lily pond where he painted his extraordinary Les Nymphéas (Water Lilies) series. There's ample time to wander here, absorbing the tranquil atmosphere while marveling at the light bouncing off the foliage of every hue and the magical reflections dancing off the water.

After another leisurely lunch on board, you can explore Vernon's quaint buildings before embarking on our cruise to Paris. As the sun sets on the shimmering Seine and the Norman countryside recedes into dusk, it's a perfect time to reflect on your few days cruising among the creamy chalk cliffs and charming villages of this splendid river.

JUNE 30, 2025: PARIS

We have arrived in Paris and this morning we take a sightseeing tour of this amazing capital, one of the world's most iconic cities. The Eiffel Tower, Arc de Triomphe, Champs Élysées, Sacré-Coeur – you'll see all these and much more. The grand Place de la Concorde, the largest square in the city, shows off 18th-century French architecture at its best, and just over the Seine on the Left Bank, you'll find the Musée d'Orsay, home of the world's finest Impressionist art collection. Then there's the eccentrically modern and yet stylish Pompidou Centre, famous not only for its exhibits but also for street entertainment. Notre-Dame Cathedral and the delicate spire of the sublime Saint-Chapelle dominate the Ile de la Cité, while the exquisite Tuileries Gardens are perfect for a stroll.

After lunch on board you could visit fine shops such as the Galeries Lafayette or those in the smart arcaded Rue de Rivoli, or perhaps wander around the café-lined streets of bohemian Montmartre. Paris is everything you imagine it to be – romantic, inspiring, vibrant – even outrageous – but best of all Paris

is unique, and a fitting finale to a wonderful cruise. This evening is the Captain's Dinner, hosted of course by the Captain himself. Featuring specialties of the regions through which we have traveled, it's a truly memorable experience.

JULY 1, 2025: DISEMBARK IN PARIS

After breakfast this morning, the crew bids you farewell before you disembark the ship, with time to look back on great memories from a superb trip. Go Bucket List Travel can arrange for extra days in Paris to extend your holiday in this beautiful city.